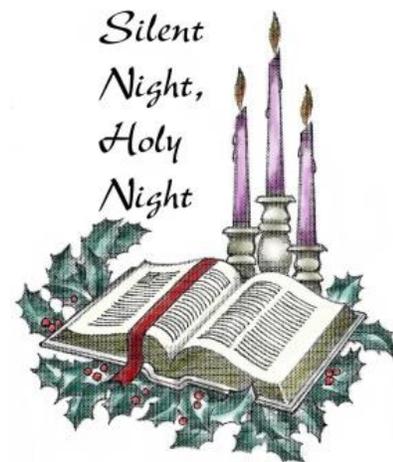


Bethlehem Star

December, 2016

WELCA Bake Sale
Sunday, December 4th

Noah's Ark
Christmas Program
Friday, December 9th
6:00pm



Christmas Eve
Candlelight
Worship
Saturday, December 24th
5:00pm - Guitar
7:00 pm - Choir

FROM THE PUGH...

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ the Lord, the newborn king...

These words from Hark the Herald Angels Sing, mirror the direction Bethlehem is invited to head towards based on the outstanding visioning workshop Pastor John Schaumburg led December 13th.

Pastor John told those present to no longer be a welcoming church, meaning not to wait for people to come to Bethlehem. Instead we are called into the future to become an inviting church, meaning to invite those we work with, play pickle ball or golf or bridge with, live in the same complex with, are in the same club with... to church to meet the newborn king. We are to take Christ out into the community instead of keeping Christ contained in the church.

I invite you to bring your address book to worship the first two Sundays in December. During worship we will pass out post cards with the dates and times of our holiday worship schedule. You provide the addresses of whom you would like them mailed to and we will do the mailing. Together we will begin our journey towards become an inviting church.

Speaking of inviting... I want to personally invite of all you volunteers to a special thank you brunch and preschool Christmas program dress rehearsal performance on Wednesday December 7th at 9:15am. There is more information in this newsletter but I want you each to know how grateful I am for all you do in service to God's mission here at Bethlehem. So, come let Arlene and I cook and serve you.

I also want to personally thank our church council for their leadership and service to the mission and ministry of Bethlehem. Bill Gappa, council president, does so much behind the scenes to keep this congregation following God's call. Jim Thompson, council Vice President, is always willing to step in to help any time he is asked. Mark Bany, council Secretary, graciously makes several trips weekly to the church to sign checks, make deposits or anything else the front office might need, Barb Ashton, church
Bethlehem Star: December, 2016

treasurer, graciously tracks the church's and the preschool's financials and produces monthly reports from where ever she is in the country, Joanne Hunt, LaVerne Carlson and Karen Vidot serve the church council as members at large making phone calls, meeting with vendors, opening the church on Sunday mornings and serving in other numerous ways.

God will be calling several people to serve on church council for a two year term in the near future. The people that are asked to serve in this capacity I have prayed for. I have asked God to place on my or the church council call committee members heart the names of whom God wants to serve in this capacity. I have asked for people who have a strong call from God. People who deepen their faith through bible study. People who believe in giving their time, talents and treasure in service to God as a privilege, not a chore.

The next two years at Bethlehem will be exciting and spirit filled as we listen to the Holy Spirit and go where the Holy Spirit leads us to go. We are so blessed at Bethlehem to have so many people involved and serving in various ways. It is your gift of love to Christ this Christmas season and all year round that we are inviting others to experience, as it is life giving and heart filling to be a named and claimed child of God.

Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas,
Pastor Chon



Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:00am - 1:00pm

Friday: 8:00am - Noon

Please have announcements and prayer requests to the church office by **10:00am Friday**.

Choir Rehearsals:

Wednesdays at 6:30pm in the sanctuary.

We are looking forward to another fun-filled season with people who love to sing. If you have any questions, Kathy Davis will be happy to talk to you about this opportunity to make new friends, praise God, and have a great time doing it!



Rally in the Valley
February 20 - 21, 2017

It will be held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 3641 N 56th Street, Phoenix, AZ.

“By Grace - Through Faith - A Gift of God — What Does This Mean Today?” is the theme of **2017 Rally**. It is the premier Lutheran Seniors Event where seniors explore their vocational calling as the people of God in the 3rd Chapter of Life. The major presentations, interest sessions, and bible studies will inform, challenge and stimulate all who attend. Come and be prepared to engage in conversation, prayer, worship, and discernment.

Check the website for registration forms and group rates. www.rallyinthevalleyaz.org.



Did You Know:

If there is an emergency here at Bethlehem and it becomes necessary to call for assistance, make the call from one of our land lines. Why, you may ask? Because our information will come up on the screen when the emergency operator answers the call. There will be no need to try and remember the address or location - the operator will already have it.

Translations of Non-Offensive Holiday Songs

(from p. 2)

1. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas
2. Silent Night, Holy Night
3. O Tannenbaum
4. We Three Kings of Orient Are
5. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
6. Joy to the World
7. Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
8. O Little Town of Bethlehem
9. Away in a Manger
10. Jolly Old St. Nicholas

Christmas Carol Quiz Answers

(from p. 13)

1. While Shepherds Watched
2. Joy to the World
3. O Holy Night
4. Hark the Harold Angels Sing
5. The First Noel
6. O Little Town of Bethlehem
7. What Child is This
8. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
9. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
10. Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful
11. Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
12. It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
13. We Three Kings of Orient Are
14. The Holly and the Ivy
15. Good King Wenceslas
16. O Christmas Tree
17. Away in a Manger
18. Angels From the Realms of Glory
19. Go Tell it on the Mountain
20. I Saw Three Ships

Fair Trade Coffee for Mission:

The coffee we use for Hospitality on Sunday, which is also on sale in the social hall, is bought through Lutheran World Relief. This is an Equal Exchange program which takes out the "middle man" so the small farmers get the fair trade value of their coffee. A small amount of our purchases go to support Lutheran World Relief. You may notice that we don't have as many different types of coffee as they were not selling. If there is a coffee type that you would like please let me know.

Thanks, Carol Savoie

3rd Thursday of the month:

WELCA

Calling all women, it's time to get together on Thursday, December 15th at 9:00 am. We have a Bible study followed by the business meeting. Bring your thoughts, ideas, and opinions to the meeting so we can work together on this ministry. We are always looking for more women to participate. If there is a group that would like to meet in the evening, let us know, we can always start another "circle" of women. Thank you all for your thoughts, prayers, and support. Co - chairs: Arlene Jacobson and Carol Savoie.

PowerPoint Pictures:

Taken any really good pictures lately? Want to share it on the PowerPoint overhead on Sunday? Email it to Laurel in the church office. Most of the pictures we use were taken by members, and we always enjoy receiving new ones. **Thank you for sharing!**

Amazon Smile:

Do you shop online at Amazon.com? Bethlehem is now part of the **Amazon Smile** program. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to **Bethlehem Lutheran Church** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. When you log on to Amazon, you must do so through smile.amazon.com.

Bethlehem's Web Site:

blcmesa.org

Share it with your friends, neighbors, and families.

Bulletin Folders:

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity, but in this busy, chaotic world of ours don't have a lot of unoccupied time? This is the opportunity for you!

Beginning in January we need 2 volunteers each week to fold the worship bulletins on Thursday mornings. It usually takes less than an hour.

Thank you to Karen Owens & Louise Secor who have been folding since 2013, but are unable to continue due to health issues.

Blue Clipboard

There is a blue clipboard in the Narthex for everyone to update current address, phone number, and email address.

We are always looking for **Prayer Warriors** who want to be informed of immediate prayers via the telephone or email. Let us know if you want to join. Perhaps you would like to receive the email prayer list on Thursdays; if so, just let us know.

Check out our **Weather Station** mounted on the pergola in the Community Garden that reports the weather, real time, on line. On your computer go to weatherunderground.com. In the search window located at the top right of the screen, type in our weather station ID. KAZMESA121. You can view weather conditions real time and see graphs that report the history. Enjoy. The direct link on your computer is:

<http://www.wunderground.com/personal-weather-station/dashboard?ID=KAZMESA121>

Face Book:

If you are already on Face Book be sure to go to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Face Book page and like us. If you are not on Face Book, consider joining, and then like Bethlehem Lutheran Church. If you want more information on how to join Face Book let us know and we will walk you through it. Tell your friends, neighbors, family - spread the word to like Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Face Book and the Good News of the gospel!

The Nurse's Corner:

Each month I highlight a health topic in the newsletter. Feel free to suggest health concerns that you would like to see added in future months.

Blessings,
Carol Savoie R.N.

HIV

World Aids Day is December 1st

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. If left untreated, HIV can lead to the disease AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). Unlike some other viruses, the human body can't get rid of HIV completely. So, once you have HIV, you have it for life.

HIV attacks the body's immune system, specifically the CD4 cells (T cells), which help the immune system fight off infections. If left untreated, HIV reduces the number of CD4 cells (T cells) in the body, making the person more likely to get infections or infection-related cancers. Over time, HIV can destroy so many of these cells that the body can't fight off infections and disease. These opportunistic infections or cancers take advantage of a very weak immune system and signal that the person has AIDS, the last state of HIV infection.

No effective cure for HIV currently exists, but with proper treatment and medical care, HIV can be controlled. The medicine used to treat HIV is called antiretroviral therapy or ART. If taken the right way, every day, this medicine can dramatically prolong the lives of many people with HIV, keep them healthy, and greatly lower their chance of transmitting the virus to others. Today, a person who is diagnosed with HIV, treated before the disease is far advanced, and stays on treatment can live a nearly as long as someone who does not have HIV. **The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to get tested.**

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection, and not everyone who has HIV advances to this stage. AIDS is the stage of infection that occurs when your immune system is badly damaged and you become vulnerable to opportunistic infections. When the number of your CD4 cells falls below 200 cells per cubic millimeter of blood (200 cells/mm³), you are considered to have progressed to AIDS. You can also be diagnosed with AIDS if you develop one or more opportunistic infections, regardless of your CD4 count.

Without treatment, people who are diagnosed with AIDS typically survive about 3 years. Once someone has a dangerous opportunistic illness, life expectancy without treatment falls to about 1 year. People with AIDS need medical treatment to prevent death.

Where Did Hiv Come From?

Scientists identified a type of chimpanzee in Central Africa as the source of HIV infection in humans. They believe that the chimpanzee version of the immunodeficiency virus (called simian immunodeficiency virus, or SIV) most likely was transmitted to humans and mutated into HIV when humans hunted these chimpanzees for meat and came into contact with their infected blood. Studies show that HIV may have jumped from apes to humans as far back as the late 1800s. Over decades, the virus slowly spread across Africa and later into other parts of the world. We know that the virus has existed in the United States since at least the mid- to late 1970s.

HIV and AIDS in the United States:

More than 1.2 million people in the US are living with HIV, and 1 in 8 of them don't know it. Over the last decade, the annual number of new HIV diagnoses declined 19%. Gay and bisexual men, particularly young African American gay and bisexual men, are most affected. Heterosexuals and people who inject drugs also continue to be affected by HIV. African Americans continue to experience the greatest burden of HIV compared to other races and ethnicities. Hispanics/Latinos are also disproportionately affected by HIV.

Living With HIV

At the end of 2012, the most recent year for which such data are available, an estimated 1,218,400 adults and adolescents were living with HIV. 156,300 (13%) had not been diagnosed. Young people were the most likely to be unaware of their infection. Among people aged 13-24, an estimated 44% (25,300) of those living with HIV didn't know.

AIDS Diagnoses And Deaths

In 2014, an estimated 20,896 people were diagnosed with AIDS. Since the epidemic began in the early 1980s, an estimated 1,210,835 people have been diagnosed with AIDS.

Information obtained from www.aids.gov.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the most serious HIV and AIDS epidemic in the world. In 2013, an estimated **24.7 million** people were living with HIV, accounting for **71% of the global total**. In the same year, there were an estimated 1.5 million new HIV infections and 1.1 million AIDS-related deaths. HIV prevalence for the region is 4.7% but varies greatly between regions within sub-Saharan Africa as well as individual countries. For example, Southern Africa is the worst affected region and is widely regarded as the 'epicenter' of the global HIV epidemic. Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence of any country worldwide (27.4%) while South Africa has the largest epidemic of any country - 5.9 million people are living with HIV. By comparison, HIV prevalence in West and East Africa is low to moderate ranging from 0.5% in Senegal to 6% in Kenya. While many countries have large, generalized epidemics, research has shown how groups such as young women and men who have sex with men are particularly at risk of HIV.

Sub-Saharan Africa (2013)

24.7 million people living with HIV

4.7 % adult HIV prevalence

1.5 million new HIV infections

1.1 million AIDS-related deaths

39 % adults on antiretroviral treatment

Information obtained from www.avert.org.

Outreach: News from Noah's Ark

How exciting it is to wake up and feel some crispness in the air. We might actually have to break out a sweater or hoodie. What a concept! The weather hint is... the holidays are upon us. In just a few short weeks we will be celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The weeks of advent that kindle the emotions in us over the anticipated birth and the ability to instill in our kids the true meaning of this blessed event, is extremely exciting.

We will be putting our Angel Tree up on Monday, November 28th. The angels on our tree are for children ages newborn to five years who reside at the Children Crisis Center in Mesa. If the spirit moves you to pick an angel or two from our tree, the children will be very blessed. Our gifts need to be returned unwrapped by Friday, December 16th.

Once the holidays are new memories to be cherished, we will be in a new year. Please mark your calendars for Thursday, January 26th – Noah's Ark Preschool and Kindergarten's 3rd annual "Wheel Day". If you or someone you know has a special set of wheels you'd like to show off to the kids and community, we would love to see you on our campus. Those wheels could be attached to a bike, motorcycle, car, truck, RV, remote control vehicle, or even a wheel barrel. Interested? Please contact Mrs. Estelle in the school office for more information.

Stay safe, healthy and filled with grace.

In Christ,
Ms. Jill

The **World Hunger Basket**, located in front of the baptismal font, is a continuing mission activity. You are invited to donate before, during, or after worship. ½ of the funds are sent to the ELCA World Hunger program, and the other ½ remain at Bethlehem to purchase food for the food bank at First Lutheran when their shelves are empty. The second page of the monthly calendar reports how much we sent to World Hunger the previous month, and how much of the funds on-hand were used to purchase food for the food bank. The cash raised at the annual Souper Bowl event is handled in the same manner.



Caring Evangelism How to Live and Share Christ's Love Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a Stephen Ministry Congregation.

As much as many people look forward to the holidays and spending time with their loved ones, there are many who go into this time of year less anticipatory. We know from experience there are many who need spiritual care. What is spiritual care? Spiritual care is helping people hear and believe that God loves them. The definition is simple, but the care is profound. Providing it requires God's help. When Stephen Ministers give spiritual care they realize all their skills are called upon. Their compassion, faith and trustworthiness are necessary.

Everyone has spiritual needs. Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10). Since people fall short of enjoying the full life that Jesus promised, they need spiritual care to hear and believe that God loves them.

The Stephen Ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is reaching out to anyone who is feeling challenged by the anticipation of the upcoming holiday season. Please contact the church office for more information on speaking to a Stephen Minister.

For more information contact Arlene Jacobson (602-686-2400) or Jill Majestic (480-325-0687)

E-Blast: Sent from the church office every Thursday via email. It allows you to get up to date information on what is going on at Bethlehem delivered straight to your computer, phone, pad, or other wireless device you use. If you are not receiving it and want to, please contact the church office and let Laurel know.



A **Special Thank You** to Brian Myers of *PM Pest Control*. He volunteers his time and services to Bethlehem and Noah's Ark for free. *PM Pest Control* can handle all of your pest and weed control needs. Call 602-920-7032.

Noah's Ark is a part of *Fry's Community Rewards*. The next time you shop at Fry's, stop by the front desk for details. Once you're set up, the rewards are automatically applied each time you use your card.

Business and Service Cards

Bulletin Board

Members and Friends of Bethlehem are invited to post your Business Cards on the Bulletin Board in the **Social Hall**.



Quilters:

Tuesdays from 9:00 to 12:00 in the Social Hall. There is no experience necessary and if you would like to check us out to see what is involved and how we make the quilts, please stop in any Tuesday - we'd love to have you! Hope to see you there!!!



Prayer Shawl creators are always invited to knit/crochet with us as we quilt.

Blue Stone Ministry:

A Gift of Stephen Ministry.

The Blue Stones in our baptismal font are sponsored by Stephen Ministry. When you pass by the baptismal font, you are invited to take one of the Blue Stones and carry it with you at all times. If you meet someone, friend or stranger, who is having a difficult struggle in their lives, this Blue Stone can help. Hand that person your Blue Stone and explain the following: **“Please take this blue stone and carry it with you. Let this be a reminder that God loves you, and you will always have God’s love no matter how difficult your life may become. Let this also remind you that you have someone here on earth who cares about you and will keep you in their prayers.”** After you have given away your new stone, please replace it with another from our baptismal font.

Newsletter Deadline:

Articles must be received in the church office by **Thursday, December 19th** to be included in the January Newsletter. If at any time you have an article for the newsletter, there’s no need to wait until the deadline - write it up while it’s fresh in your mind and send it in. It will be included in the following month’s newsletter.

Memorial Tiles:

Bethlehem Lutheran Church participants have the availability of purchasing memorial plaque tiles to go on our master plaque. An individual name tile costs \$15. If you choose two names, one on each tile, the cost is \$25. If you are interested or need more information, please contact the church office (480-832-0462).

Bethlehem Star: December, 2016

Nursery:

Our nursery is run by volunteers who are available during worship one Sunday each month to care for young children when needed. Our nursery caregiver on the first Sunday of each month is no longer able to continue. If this is your calling, please contact the church office (480-832-0462).

Vimeo:

If you want to hear the sermon again or share it, recorded sermons and special events at Bethlehem are available to be watched and downloaded at Vimeo.com/blcmesa. Check out Preschool activities, Heart Fire activities, the latest wedding or baptism, and Pastor Chon’s sermon. The site supports HD quality videos and is not restricted by length or storage capacities (other than a maximum of 5 gig per week). If you record a video of a church-related function and would like it posted on our site, please contact the church office (480-832-0462).

Holy Yoga

A Christ-centered yoga class on Tuesdays from 6:00-7:00 pm in Room 9/10. No experience needed. Can be done from chairs or the floor. Bring: yoga mat, comfortable clothes, water, & \$5 suggested donation. Questions? Call Renaya VanDusen at 480-717-3477.

Media at Bethlehem

We’re always on the lookout for new ideas about how Bethlehem can use social media. Tell us yours. We want to share God's promises with all creation.

Every Thursday:

Men’s Bible Study

7:30am in the Social Hall.



2nd Wednesday of the month:

Mexican Train Dominoes

December 14th at 1:00pm in the NCO.

Counters Wanted:

Count the offering following worship 1 Sunday a month. Substitutes are also needed. To volunteer, or for more information see Barb Ashton or contact the church office (480-832-0462).

Prayer Shawl Ministry:

We are meeting on the 4th Wednesday with the Counted Cross Stitch Group at 1:00pm in the NCO.

Members and friends are encouraged to take Prayer Shawls for friends or family who are having difficult times, grieving, illness, etc. The notebook we ask people to sign showing where the Shawls are going is really interesting. It's amazing how far reaching this Ministry is!

Thanks to everyone who are making the shawls. There is a brochure in the Narthex for the Prayer Shawls which includes 2 patterns if anyone would like to try making them. There is also a nice supply of yarn in the Nursery for making the Prayer Shawls.

If anyone is interested in learning how to knit or crochet Prayer Shawls, we will be pleased to teach you. Questions? Call the church office (480-832-0462).

Newsletter: Receive the newsletter via email and save postage and paper costs.

4th Wednesday of the month:

Cross Stitching & Prayer Shawls

The stitchers will not meet in December, but would love to have you join us in January.

Bring your project of choice and join us for a couple of hours of camaraderie and quiet. Don't have a project? Just join us anyway.

Questions? Just ask Carol Savoie. 480-313-4739.

Reformation 500 Retreat

- January 13th & 14th
- Bishop Emeritus Mark Hanson will be the guest speaker: "What's Great About Being Lutheran"
- Friday evening: presentation, dessert, & Vespers.
- Saturday: continental breakfast, presentations, closing worship.
- Cost: \$15
- Location: Desert Cross Lutheran Church
8600 S. McClintock, Tempe
- Register: www.desertcross.org or 480-730-8300

POINSETTIAS

Christmas is rapidly approaching,
and it is time to order your poinsettias.
Orders must be in by Sunday, December 11th.
The cost is \$10

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Number of Plants: _____

_____ To the Glory of God

_____ In Memory of: _____

_____ In Honor of: _____

ELCA Today

Who we are

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is one church body organized in three expressions – congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization.

- **3.7 million members**
- **9,300 congregations**
- **65 synods**

Each expression has its own particular function, but all three share a common mission of doing God's work in the world and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

The churchwide organization acts on behalf of this church's members, congregations and synods to unite our ministry on a scale and scope we could never do alone.

Together, we are implementing a large-scale response to human need and suffering. We are responding to social issues and working for justice and peace. We are nurturing relationships with ecumenical and interfaith partners. And we are providing resources to equip members to worship, learn, serve and witness in their daily ministry.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton shares four emphases:

1. We are church
2. We are Lutheran
3. We are church together
4. We are church for the sake of the world

Together, we are doing God's work in the world. While one congregation is opening its doors to neighbors experiencing homelessness, another is serving meals at a soup kitchen, or caring for God's creation by cleaning up local parks and roadways. When you serve, you serve and minister on behalf of all of us. Each one of us has a unique story, and we are part of a larger story that makes up the ELCA.

ELCA Facts

CONGREGATION

- On September 8, 2015, **more than 4,000 congregations took part in God's Work. Our Hands.**, a dedicated day of service across the ELCA.
- We planted **62 new congregations** in 2015.
- In 2015, we launched congregational **renewal efforts in 134 congregations.**

LEADERSHIP

- **Bishop Eaton introduced two webcasts** as a new way to learn and stay connected with one another. Because of the success of these webcasts, more will be broadcast in the coming months and well into the future.
 - We supported **228 students** at seven ELCA seminaries through the ELCA Fund for Leaders.
 - We support the work of **8 ELCA seminaries and 26 colleges and universities.**
 - We recruit, prepare and implement a system for the assignment of **more than 9,000 rostered leaders.**

HUNGER AND POVERTY

- We supported **creative solutions to hunger and poverty in nearly 60 countries** around the world, including **347 programs in the United States** through ELCA World Hunger.
- Committed to work to help end deaths from malaria **in 14 countries in Africa** through the ELCA Malaria Campaign.
- **In 2015, gifts given to ELCA World Hunger totaled \$21,944,702**—more than in any single year. These are gifts that will provide immediate food and shelter, as well as support toward lasting systemic change.
- Together, we've **raised \$15 million for the ELCA Malaria Campaign** to help end deaths from malaria in 14 African countries. In doing this we:
 - Educated 2 million community members
 - Distributed 50,000 insecticide-treated bed nets
 - Tested 160,000 people for malaria, and if positive, provided treatment
 - Trained 10,000 local volunteers in prevention and treatment
 - Empowered 12,000 households to be economically stable
 - Provided 32,000 pregnant women prevention medication

GLOBAL CHURCH

- We support The Lutheran World Federation's global communion of churches with **more than 80 companion churches** in other countries.
- We sent **73 young adults** into global service and added **one new country program** in Cambodia through the Young Adults in Global Mission program, and continued support of at least **220 missionaries in more than 40 countries** around the world in 2015.
 - In 2015, we awarded **6 college scholarships** to promising young women from our global companion churches.

You Are Cordially Invited To The First Annual Volunteer Thank- You Show And Brunch.

Who:

Everyone who has volunteered at Bethlehem and Noah's Ark this past year.

What:

A thank-you show and brunch: Come watch the dress rehearsal of the Noah's Ark Christmas Program and then stay for a brunch.

When:

Wednesday, December 7th @ 9:15am
(Please RSVP to the church office by December 5th)

Where:

Meet in the sanctuary for the dress rehearsal and then to the social hall for brunch.

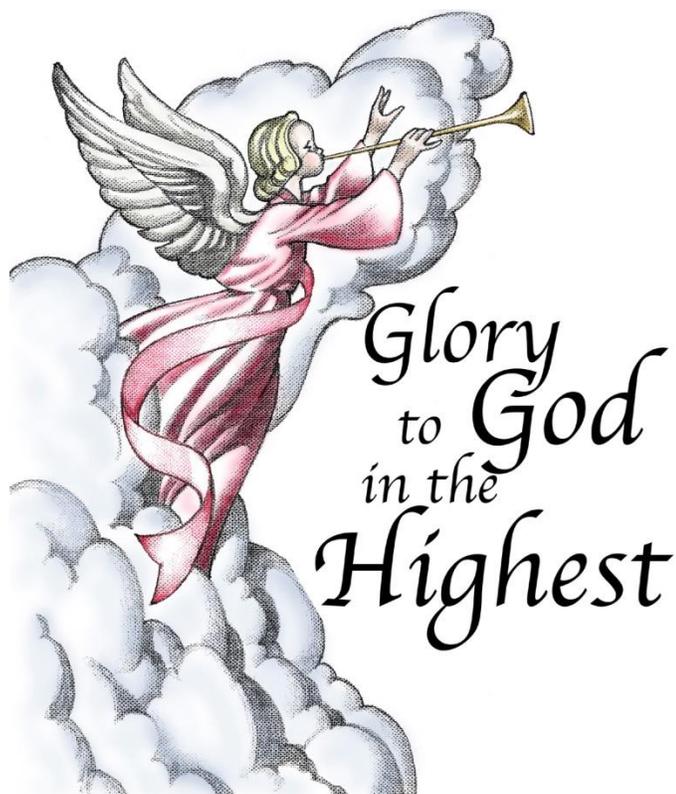
There are so many people who volunteer their time.

Some ways are:

Ushers, greeters, readers, council members, bulletin printers, bulletin folders, greeters, Noah's Ark VIP readers, Fall Festival helpers, maintenance around the campus, meeting the bug man, Heart Fire members, choir members, Stephen Ministers, Communion takers, acolytes, videographers, Harvest of Hope volunteers, I-Help volunteers and coordinators, hospitality, Parrish nurse, nursery, children's church, counters, check signers, quilters, prayer shawl makers, youth volunteers, bread bakers, power point, filer, pop machine filler, purchase and deliver food bank, Bessie Lu's mom, altar guild plus so many more...

I thank you all.

Bethlehem is one of the few churches I have served that instead of having 20% doing the work and 80% uninvolved, Bethlehem has 80% sharing their gifts with the congregation. We are so blessed by your gifts and your willingness to share them.



Non-Offensive Holiday Songs

1. I'm Envisioning a Culturally Diverse December 25th With a Covering of Crystallized Water Particles of Non-Color
2. Noise Pollution-Free Evening, Spiritually Empowered Evening
3. O Botanical Growth With Special Meaning Attributed To December 25th
4. This Unit of Royal Males Coming From Eastern Geographical Locations
5. Higher Power (of your understanding) Grant Serenity to You Jocular Males of Distinguishable Breeding
6. Deprivation of Sadness to the Conglomerate of Nations Found on This Biosphere
7. Actively Listen! The Communication Spirit Guides of Heaven are Doing Music
8. O Small Community of the Middle East
9. Temporarily Relocated in Alternate Housing Shared with Non-Domesticated Animal Companions
10. Recognized Catholic Icon Named Nicholas Who is a Euphoric Senior Citizen
(Answers on p. 3)

The History of Cursillo

Cursillo began when a group of Catholic priests and laymen in Majorca, Spain examined the condition of the Church. From 1943 to 1947, they formulated a “method” to bring renewal to the Church. They called it a “short course” or “short experience” in the fundamental teachings of Jesus, as lived with other Christians. They also developed an on-going program, so the initial enthusiasm would continue.

The first Cursillo weekend, held in the United States, was in 1957 in Texas. From this beginning, Cursillo has been introduced to the Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist and Reformed Church in America.

In Arizona, the first Cursillo was in Phoenix in 1959. Until 1961, all of the weekends were in Spanish. The first Lutheran Cursillo weekend in Phoenix was held in March, 1982. We have had over 150 weekends since then & we keep having 2 weekends for men & 2 for women every year. One is in the fall & the other is in the spring. If you have any questions, or think you would like to go on a weekend (it is totally free to you), please talk to me soon, so we can get the paperwork going. It was a real blessing to Doug and I, when we went in October, 2014.

Estelle Hasert



Silent Night, Holy Night

Christmas Trivia

- The Germans made the first artificial Christmas trees out of dyed goose feathers.
- Each year more than 3 billion Christmas cards are sent in the U.S. alone.
- All the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would equal 364 gifts.
- The “true love” mentioned in the song “Twelve Days of Christmas” does not refer to a romantic couple, but the Catholic Church’s code for God. The person who receives the gifts represents someone who has accepted that code. For example, the “partridge in a pear tree” represents Christ. The “two turtledoves” represent the Old and New Testaments.
- Most of Santa’s reindeer have male-sounding names, such as Blitzen, Comet, and Cupid. However, male reindeers shed their antlers around Christmas, so the reindeer pulling Santa’s sleigh are likely not male, but female or castrated.
- In A.D. 350, Pope Julius I, bishop of Rome, proclaimed December 25 the official celebration date for the birthday of Christ.
- The traditional three colors of Christmas are green, red, and gold. Green has long been a symbol of life and rebirth; red symbolizes the blood of Christ, and gold represents light as well as wealth and royalty.
- Christmas trees have been sold in the U.S. since 1850.
- Christmas trees usually grow for about 15 years before they are sold.
- Each year there are approximately 20,000 “rent-a-Santas” across the United States. “Rent-a-Santas” usually undergo seasonal training on how to maintain a jolly attitude under pressure from the public. They also receive practical advice, such as not accepting money from parents while children are looking and avoiding garlic, onions, or beans for lunch.